

and meritorious. It will keep the tradesman from " frequent and needless frequenting of taverns/' and pin him to his shop, " where you may most confidently expect the presence and blessing of God."

If virtue is advantageous, vice is ruinous. Bad company, speculation, gambling, politics, and " a preposterous zeal " in religion—it is these things which are the ruin of tradesmen. Not, indeed, that religion is to be neglected. On the contrary, it " is to be exercised in the frequent use of holy ejaculations."

What is deprecated is merely the unbusinesslike habit of " neglecting a man's necessary affairs upon pretence of religious worship." But these faults, common and uncommon alike, are precisely those to be avoided by the sincere Christian, who must not, indeed, deceive or oppress his peighbour, but need not fly to the other extreme, be righteous overmuch, or refuse to " take the advantage which the Providence of God puts into his hands/' By a kind of happy, pre-established harmony, such as a later age discovered between the needs of society and the self-interest of the individual, success in business is in itself almost a sign of spiritual grace, for it is a proof that a man has laboured faithfully in his vocation, and that " God has blessed his trade." " Nothing will pass in any man's account except it be done in the way of his

calling, . . . Next
to the saving his soul, [the
tradesman's] care and
business is to serve God in his calling, and
to drive it
as far as it will go."

When duty was so profitable, might not
profit-
making be a duty ? Thus argued the
honest pupils
of Mr. Gripeman, the schoolmaster of Love-
gain, a
market-town in the county of Coveting in
the north,¹¹
The inference was illogical, but how
attractive 1 When
the Rev. David Jones was so indiscreet as
to preach^
at St. Mary Woolnoth in Lombard Street a
sermon
against usury, on the text, " The Pharisees
who were
covetous heard all these things and they
derided